

# Rural District Council of Wells.

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1906.

STREET, SOMERSET,  
JANUARY 28th, 1907.

To the Rural District Council of Wells.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit my Report for the year ended December 31st, 1906.

Area.	58,212 Acres.
Population.	Census 1901, 10,767. Estimated to middle of 1906 at 10,437.
Geology.	Dolomitic conglomerate at Chewton and Westbury; mountain limestone at Priddy; red marl at Dinder, North Wootton and Rodney Stoke; red marl and river gravel at Wookey; lower lias at West Pennard, Baltonsborough, Butleigh and Walton; alluvium and peat at Glastonbury Moor.
Occupation.	Chiefly agricultural, cheese and cider making. Paper factories at Wookey and Wookey Hole. Lead mines at Priddy. Some of the inhabitants at Butleigh and Walton work at the shoe, leather, and skin factories at Street and Glastonbury, and at the quarries at Street.
Birth Rate.	220 Births registered (106 males, 114 females), giving a <i>birth rate of 21.07</i> per 1,000 per annum. Of these, <i>six</i> were illegitimate (1 male, 5 females.)
Death Rate.	216 deaths registered (104 males, 112 females), giving a <i>death rate of 20.6</i> per 1,000 per annum. 102 <i>deaths</i> occurred in the Somerset and Bath County Asylum at Wells, Deducting these, <i>corrected death rate for the Rural District</i> is 10.9 per 1,000 per annum.
Zymotic Death Rate.	Three deaths registered from zymotic disease, giving a <i>zymotic rate of 0.28</i> per 1,000 living.
Infant Mortality.	The Infant Mortality per 1,000 births is 77.2; 17 deaths under one year being registered.

### FOR THE YEAR 1905.

Birth Rate.	Birth rate .. .. per 1,000 living .. ..	23.8
Death Rate.	Death rate .. .. " " .. ..	20.5
Corrected Death Rate.	Corrected Death rate .. .. " " .. ..	12.09
Zymotic Rate.	Zymotic Death rate .. .. " " .. ..	0.85
Infant Mortality.	Infant Mortality per 1,000 births .. ..	92

Water Supply. At *Butleigh, Chewton Mendip, Dinder, Priddy and Rodney Stoke*, the supply is good, also *West Pennard*—part of which district is now, by arrangement with the Glastonbury Corporation, supplied by that Authority. Could a similar arrangement be made with regard to the *North Wootton district*—through which the Glastonbury mains cross—a great boon would be conferred on this locality.

*Baltonsborough* is now supplied by the District Council through a supply obtained from the Shepton Mallet Rural District Council, and Godney by the Street Urban District Council—and many of the homes at Polsham are supplied from the latter Authority. The immunity of these districts from notifiable disease during the year is worthy of note.

*Meare* is dependant mostly on shallow wells, and in some instances on the river—for its supply. To the *Meareway* and *Ashcott* corner localities I have in previous reports referred—the wells in the former being especially liable to pollution, and the latter drawing its supply either from ditches or the rhine.

At *Westbury* part of district is well supplied, the *Hollywell* part not being so satisfactory.

*Horrington*—in the Out St. Cuthbert District—has now a good supply of its own.

At *Walton* the supply is from wells—which in dry weather soon become exhausted. In the *Sharpham district* the supply is either from rain water tanks, the ditches, or the canal. The erection of a stand-pipe from the Street Urban District Council's main, for use in this district, has not yet been carried out. Further delay is to be deprecated.

I have examined a number of samples of well water during the year, and reported thereon to the Council.

No general system of drainage exists in the district. Privies with cesspits are principally in use, and being emptied infrequently, and at times draining into an adjoining water-course, are a source of danger. The system of earth closets, where practicable, is encouraged, and is being increasingly carried out.

I have visited the Wells City Sewage Works and the stream into which the effluent flows, during the year. The question of the prevention of the pollution of the stream and the successful treatment of the sewage and the dealing with the large quantity of storm water, which at times comes through the tanks, is now in the hands of an expert engaged by the City Council.

Seven cases of Scarlet Fever have been notified during the year—two from the Out St. Cuthbert district, two from Rodney Stoke, two from Meare and one from Walton. Nine cases of Diphtheria have been notified—one from Out St. Cuthbert, one from Wookey, five from Chewton Mendip, one from Meare and one from West Pennard Station. Seven cases of Erysipelas have been notified—one in the Wells Out St. Cuthbert, one from Rodney Stoke, one from Wookey, one from Meare and three from Butleigh districts. Four cases of Enteric Fever were notified—one from Out St. Cuthbert, one from Wookey, one from North Wootton and one from the Lunatic Asylum.

The various premises have been visited by the Inspector and myself on the notification of disease, and the necessary notices for isolation and disinfection secured, and as far as possible isolation has been effected. Disinfection of the premises afterwards being carried out.

Two cases of Anthrax were reported by the Deputy Chief Constable in August, the necessary steps being taken by the police.

In February, owing to the prevalence of measles in the parish of Walton, the Public School was, on my advice, closed. A large number of cases of Chicken Pox occurred in the Horrington district in May and June, followed by a form of impetigo.

It may be interesting to recall the number of cases of infectious disease notified in the district since 1892—the year the Notification Act was adopted:—

1892 .. 31	1897 .. 15	1902 .. 77
1893 .. 38	1898 .. 20	1903 .. 30
1894 .. 45	1899 .. 49	1904 .. 27
1895 .. 35	1900 .. 38	1905 .. 46
1896 .. 38	1901 .. 50	1906 .. 27



Table of Deaths.

Ages, Table of Deaths (excluding deaths in Asylum) :

Under 1 year there were 17 deaths.					
1 and under 5 years there were 5 deaths.					
5	„	„	15	„	„
15	„	„	25	„	„
25	„	„	65	„	„
65	and upwards			„	„

Causes of Death.

			Rural District.	Asylum.
Enteric Fever	..	..	..	1
Influenza	..	..	6	
Diarrhœa	..	..	2	
Enteritis	..	..	1	
Phthisis	..	..	7	12
Other Tubercular Disease	..	..	1	
Cancer, Malignant Disease	..	..	7	
Bronchitis	..	..	8	1
Pneumonia	..	..	6	2
Other Diseases of Respiratory Organs	..	..	4	
Alcoholism	..	..	1	1
Premature Birth	..	..	5	
Heart Diseases	..	..	20	6
Accidents	..	..	5	
Suicides	..	..	5	
All other causes	..	..	36	79

Deaths in Districts.

The Deaths were distributed in the following districts :—

Wells Out	..	35	North Wootton	..	2
Westbury	..	7	Meare	..	15
Rodney Stoke	..	12	Godney	..	3
Wookey	..	11	Walton	..	5
Chewton Mendip	..	9	Butleigh	..	3
Baltonsborough	..	8	West Pennard	..	3
Dinder	..	1	Lunatic Asylum	..	102

No death in Priddy or Sharpham Districts.

Isolation Hospital

None. The provision of one recommended. Cottages at Worminster are retained by the Council for the isolation of Small-pox, should any case arise. Its inaccessibility, however, precludes use for general isolation purposes.

Housing of the Working Classes.

Visits paid with the Inspector. Several cases of overcrowding dealt with. One prosecution with regard to house unfit for occupation.

Dairies, Cowsheds and MilkShops.

No systematic inspection is made, no register being kept. Should any disease under the Notification Act be reported from premises which would come under this heading, the Dairies are inspected, the water supply examined, directions given for the removal of the milk from the infected premises, and all persons concerned in the supply of milk forbidden contact with the infected person, or nurse, and orders given for the correction of any insanitary conditions found, the same being reported to the Council.

Factory and Work-shops Act, 1901.

Inspections have been made under this Act by the Inspectors and myself. Registers of Workshops are kept, and the various Factories and Workshops visited and inspected. The sanitation, ventilation, means of escape in case of fire, and the provision of suitable sanitary convenience attended to.

General Inspections.

Slaughter-houses, Bake-houses and Public Schools visited and inspected.

Disinfection Means.

Fumigation by sulphur candles. Disinfectants are supplied gratuitously by the Rural District Council.

Bye-Laws.

None. A suitable code required.

I append tables of statistics as required by the Local Government Board, together with reports from the Sanitary Inspectors, to whose co-operation I am again greatly indebted.

I have the honour to be, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE W. EGLINTON.

# Reports and Summary of Inspectors of Nuisances.

## DISTRICT No. 1.

I beg to present my report for the year ended December 31st, 1906.

During the year I have endeavoured to carry out the duties prescribed by the Local Government Board for an Inspector of Nuisances, reported to, and attended all Meetings of the Council and carried out their instructions as also those of the Medical Officer of Health for the prevention of the spread of Infectious Disease.

The following is a summary of the cases reported by me to the Council, and dealt with by order :—

	No of Cases.
Dwelling houses with insufficient privy accommodation	4
Dwelling houses overcrowded	3
Dwelling houses unfit for human habitation, notices served, and occupation discontinued	2
Infected dwellings, occupiers served with notice as to isolation of patients, disinfection, &c.	15
Dwellings and clothing disinfected as directed by the Medical Officer of Health	13
New dwelling houses erected for which certificates of occupation have been granted by the Council	11
Dilapidated and dangerous buildings repaired	9
Dilapidated and dangerous privies repaired	11
Nuisances arising from foul and choked drains, foul accumulations, &c.	37
Animals kept in such a state as to be a nuisance	3
New sewer laid	1
New drains laid and old ones repaired	6
Slaughter houses, bake houses and public schools inspected (no bye-laws in force)	26
Pollution of stream dealt with	1
Samples of water submitted to the Medical Officer of Health	2
Well opened and cleansed by order	1
Formal notices served by the Inspector	86
Factory and Workshop Act 1901—	
There are registered in the district 9 Factories ; 36 Workshops ; 43 Workplaces ; 9 Bake houses ; 1 Outworker.	

All these places have been visited during the year, and are in a fairly clean and satisfactory sanitary condition.

In addition to the above, a large number of inspections have been made in my daily rounds and visits, and verbal notice given to abate nuisances.

PHILIP WILLIAMS, *Inspector No. 1 District.*

## DISTRICT No. 2.

During the year I have again endeavoured to carry out the instructions of the Local Government Board prescribing the duties of Inspector of Nuisances, as also the directions of the Medical Officer of Health in regard to the prevention of the spread of infectious disease. I have also attended and reported to each Meeting of the Council, and carried out their instructions.

The following is a summary of cases reported to the Council, and dealt with by order :—

	No. of Cases.
Common sewers extended and repaired	4
New drains laid and old ones repaired	9
Insanitary and dilapidated privies repaired	17
New privies provided	8
Animals so kept as to be a nuisance	8
Dilapidated dwelling repaired	1
Nuisances arising from foul accumulations, &c.	20
Overcrowded dwelling	1
Certificate for occupation of new dwelling	1
Infected dwellings : Occupiers served with notices as to isolation of patients and disinfection of dwellings, &c. (Disinfectants supplied by the Council)	13
Dwellings and clothing disinfected by Inspector, as directed by Medical Officer of Health	13
Slaughter houses and the offices of public schools inspected (no bye-laws in force)	15
Factories and workshops, including bake houses	38
Dwellings where 'home workers' are employed	26
Formal notices served by Inspector	36

Note—Although there have been 13 cases of infectious disease notified (3 of which were Erysipelas), in no case has the disease spread beyond the dwelling at which it was notified.

In addition to the above, a large number of inspections and re-inspections have been made, and verbal notices given by me in my rounds and periodical inspections, as well as rendering assistance in connection with the water supplied in the district.

EDWIN H. PADFIELD, *Inspector No. 2 District.*